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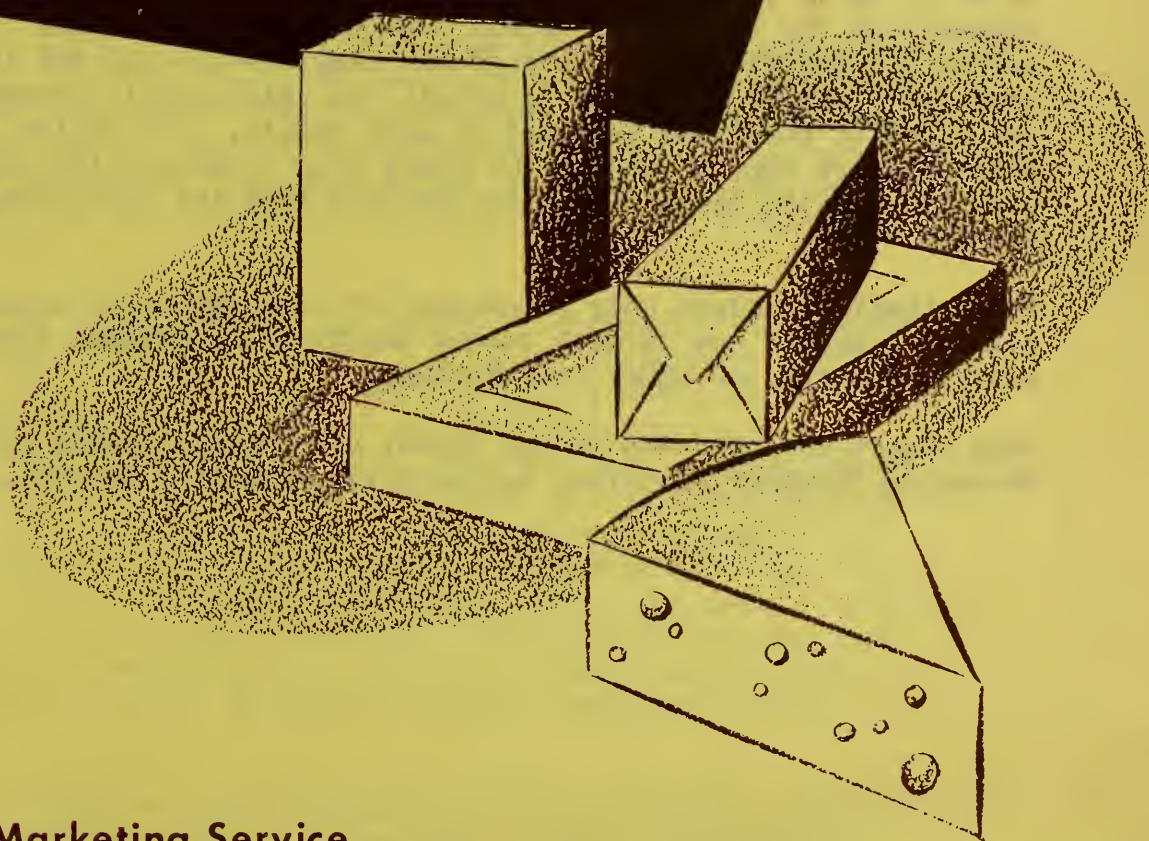
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# Household Purchases of Butter, Cheese, Nonfat Dry Milk Solids, and Margarine, March 1955



HPD-6

May 1955

Agricultural Marketing Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

## PREFACE

This report is one in a series of monthly reports, the first of which was published for April 1954, showing estimates of current household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data for butter and margarine were obtained from records of the contractor for the months April 1953 - March 1954. Prior to April 1954, the number of families in the sample used in making estimates was about 4,300.

In order to maintain comparability between the data obtained prior to April 1954 and the current data, the back data were adjusted to the new sample level. The adjustment was made by tabulating reports from both consumer samples--the old and the new--for a period of months to obtain the relationship between the level of purchases reported by each sample. The ratios thus obtained were used to adjust the April 1953 - January 1954 monthly estimates to the level currently reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.



HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY  
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, MARCH 1955

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) in order to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

United States householders reported during March 1955 that they bought 14 percent more butter and 8 percent more margarine than in March a year ago. Household purchases of butter were larger each month in the 12 months ending March 31, 1955, than in the corresponding months a year earlier. Margarine purchases for household use were reported larger in each month of the half year ending March 31, 1955, than in the same month a year earlier; they had been slightly smaller during April-September 1954 than in the same period of 1953.

The comparisons of household purchases of butter and margarine during 1953-54 and 1954-55 are based on samples of representative households--see preface for details--which indicate, within reasonable limits, changes in purchases from a year ago and from month to month. The data do not include estimates of purchases for use in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutions.

Householders bought 64 million pounds of butter during a 4-week period in March 1955, a gain of 8 million pounds over purchases in March 1954. For the dairy marketing year April 1954-March 1955, butter purchases for household use were reported 13 percent greater than in the same period a year earlier. A Department preliminary estimate of total domestic civilian disappearance of creamery butter, excluding butter donated under domestic food distribution programs, during April 1954-March 1955 indicates an increase of about 9 percent over April 1953-March 1954. Household purchases of butter during the year ending March 31, 1955, were estimated to make up over 60 percent of total disappearance of creamery butter in all domestic channels, household and non-household.

Purchases of butter by householders in March 1955 were unchanged from the preceding month. A year ago in March, householders reported a gain of 3 million pounds from the preceding month.

The average price paid for butter by householders in this survey during March 1955 was just under 68 cents a pound (table 1).

This March price was the same as a month earlier and about 5 cents per pound less than in March 1954. Average prices paid by consumers for butter during April 1954-March 1955 were about 10 percent lower than a year earlier.

Over 45 percent of all families reported purchases of butter during the 4-week period of March 1955, one percentage point above the same month in 1954 but unchanged from the 2 preceding months. The percentage of all families buying butter was reported above a year earlier each month during the October 1954-March 1955 period; in the April-September 1954 period, it had been slightly smaller than a year earlier. For the entire year ending March 31, 1955, there was a slight increase over a year earlier in the reported percentage of all families buying butter.

Margarine purchases for household use during March 1955 were reported at almost 100 million pounds, up 8 million pounds from March 1954. For the April 1954-March 1955 period, margarine purchases by United States householders were reported about 3 percent larger than in the preceding 12-month period. The Department's preliminary estimate of total domestic disappearance of margarine in all outlets, household and nonhousehold, during the year ending March 31, 1955, was about 4 percent above April 1953-March 1954. Household purchases of margarine were estimated to be about 90 percent of total domestic civilian use during the 12-month period April 1954-March 1955.

United States householders reported buying 4 million pounds less of margarine in March 1955 than in the preceding month. This reported change was little different from the 3-million-pound drop in margarine purchases from February to March 1954 (table 2).

Margarine prices paid by householders in this survey continued to be relatively stable in March. For the 12 months ending March 31, 1955, the average of prices paid for margarine was reported about the same as in the preceding 12-month period.

About 62 percent of all families reported margarine purchases in March 1955, compared with 60 percent in March 1954. The percentage of all families buying margarine during April 1954-March 1955 was slightly above a year earlier, reflecting the combination of a slight decline from a year earlier each month during April-September 1954 and an increase over a year earlier for each month in the October 1954-March 1955 period.

For the third consecutive month, 20 percent of all families reported buying both butter and margarine in March 1955. On the other hand, 13 percent reported buying neither butter nor margarine in March 1955, a somewhat greater percentage than that observed in several preceding months.



Information on household purchases of cheese and nonfat dry milk solids prior to April 1954 is not available.

Householders bought an estimated total of 53.8 million pounds of natural and processed cheese (purchased weight basis) in March 1955. This total for March 1955 was 2 million pounds less than purchases in the preceding month but was relatively high compared to other months during the April 1954-March 1955 period.

Natural cheese purchases by households during March 1955 were reported at 29.3 million pounds, just under the 29.6 million pounds reported for the preceding month. Consumers reported buying more natural American and Swiss cheese than in February 1955 but smaller quantities of cream and "other" varieties. The drop in purchases of "other" varieties, which includes many special types of cheese, was particularly noticeable in March (table 4).

Total processed cheese purchases for household use in March 1955 were reported at 24.5 million pounds compared with 26.3 million pounds in February. Consumers reported during March smaller purchases of all types--processed cheese, cheese spreads, and cheese foods--than a month earlier. In recent months, the level of cheese food purchases has declined relative to total processed cheese purchases, while cheese spread purchases in recent months reflected a gain in relation to purchases of all processed types (table 5).

Prices for the natural and processed cheese types were reported little changed in March from the preceding month. The percentage of all families making purchases of natural or processed cheese was 60 percent in March 1955, down from the 2 preceding months but about average for the 12 months April 1954-March 1955.

Cottage cheese purchases, not included in the above cheese totals, gained sharply in March for the third consecutive month and were reported at 43.2 million pounds. The reported March level of cottage cheese purchases for household use was the highest for any month in the April 1954-March 1955 period and well above the average monthly purchases of 35 million pounds. Prices paid for cottage cheese, at 21 cents for a 12-ounce unit, were virtually unchanged during the year ending March 1955. Consumers also reported during the April 1954-March 1955 period that the size of average purchase for cottage cheese was close to 1 pound (table 6).

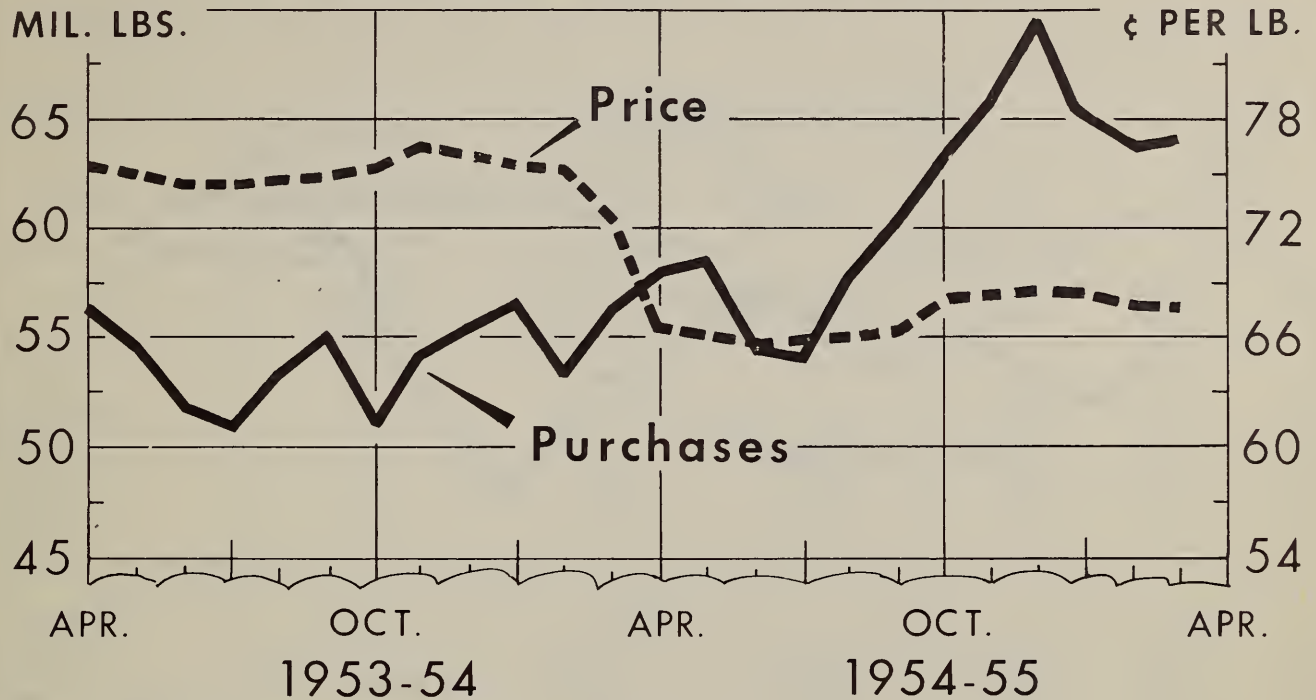
Purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for household use in March 1955 were reported at 13.3 million pounds, down slightly from the 13.5 million pounds reported in February but at a relatively high level for the year April 1954-March 1955. Purchases of nonfat dry milk solids were reported particularly high in the first 3

months of 1955 compared with the preceding 9 months. This increase in volume of purchases in early 1955 is associated with an increase in number of families buying nonfat dry milk solids, but these comparisons of percentages of families buying are available only in the quarterly reports in this series.

The average of prices paid for nonfat dry milk solids by householders was just over 40 cents per pound in March, about the same as in January and February. Prices during the April-December 1954 period were reported under 40 cents per pound, and they were close to 35 cents per pound in mid-summer (table 7).



# HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES AND PRICES OF BUTTER



SOURCE: NATIONAL CONSUMER PANEL OF MRCA

4-WEEK PERIODS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

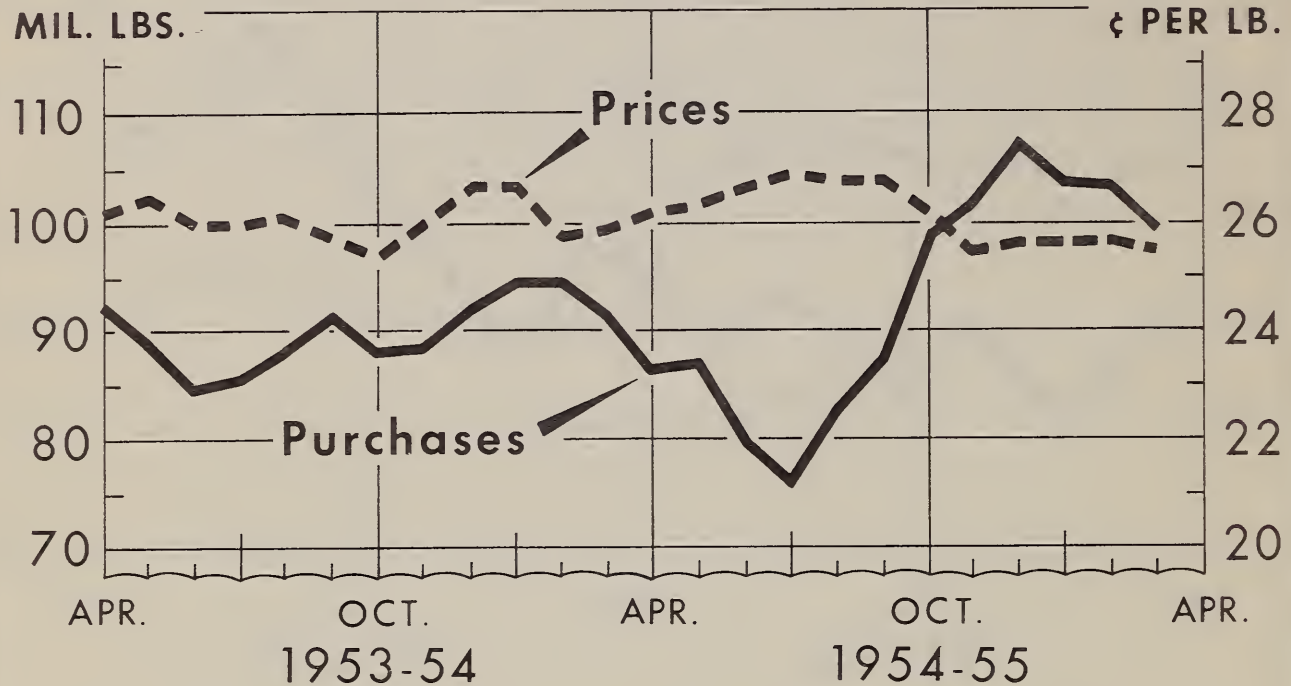
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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased				Average price paid		Percentage of all families buying		Per buying family			
	Total		Per 1,000 population		per pound		families buying		Purchases		Quantity per purchase	
	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Percent	Percent	Number	Number	Pounds	Pounds
April-----	58.0	56.2	367	369	66.6	75.1	44.0	44.7	2.74	2.71	1.09	1.06
May-----	58.5	54.7	371	359	66.0	75.0	42.8	43.5	2.80	2.75	1.10	1.04
June-----	54.5	51.9	345	340	65.7	74.5	41.4	42.7	2.72	2.64	1.09	1.04
July-----	54.2	50.9	341	332	65.8	74.5	42.2	43.3	2.65	2.58	1.09	1.04
August-----	57.9	53.3	364	348	64.0	74.7	43.3	44.2	2.81	2.67	1.08	1.03
September-----	60.4	55.1	379	360	66.4	74.9	43.1	45.9	2.85	2.69	1.09	1.03
October-----	63.2	51.0	394	331	68.1	75.3	45.4	43.7	2.84	2.59	1.09	1.02
November-----	65.7	54.4	410	353	68.2	76.6	46.2	44.8	2.88	2.65	1.09	1.04
December-----	69.2	55.5	432	361	68.6	76.0	48.5	44.4	2.66	2.68	1.11	1.05
January-----	65.3	56.6	407	367	68.2	75.6	45.5	42.8	2.73	2.90	1.09	1.04
February-----	63.8	53.4	398	346	67.7	75.2	45.6	42.2	2.65	2.73	1.10	1.04
March-----	64.0	56.3	399	365	67.6	72.2	45.4	44.1	2.67	2.75	1.09	1.04

# HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES AND PRICES OF MARGARINE



SOURCE: NATIONAL CONSUMER PANEL OF MRCA

4-WEEK PERIODS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 1104-55(5) AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Table 2.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased				Average price paid		Percentage of all families buying		Per buying family			
	Total		Per 1,000 population		per pound				Purchases		Quantity per purchase	
	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54	1954-55	1953-54
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Percent	Percent	Number	Number	Pounds	Pounds
April-----	86.3	92.1	546	605	26.2	26.2	56.4	58.6	2.38	2.47	1.45	1.43
May-----	87.1	89.1	551	584	26.4	26.5	56.4	57.7	2.39	2.45	1.44	1.42
June-----	79.9	84.5	506	554	26.7	26.0	54.7	56.9	2.25	2.35	1.45	1.43
July-----	76.2	85.5	479	558	26.9	26.0	53.5	57.7	2.23	2.31	1.43	1.46
August-----	82.7	88.0	520	574	26.8	26.1	55.7	58.7	2.31	2.36	1.44	1.45
September-----	87.8	91.1	552	595	26.8	25.8	58.0	59.9	2.36	2.40	1.43	1.43
October-----	98.7	88.2	616	573	26.2	25.4	62.4	58.9	2.39	2.24	1.46	1.49
November-----	101.8	86.5	635	575	25.5	26.0	63.4	60.0	2.41	2.24	1.48	1.46
December-----	107.1	91.8	670	597	25.7	26.7	63.7	60.0	2.29	2.37	1.53	1.47
January-----	103.9	94.6	648	614	25.7	26.7	63.2	58.7	2.29	2.46	1.48	1.46
February-----	103.4	94.7	645	600	25.7	25.8	63.3	60.7	2.25	2.37	1.51	1.45
March-----	99.4	91.7	620	581	25.5	25.9	61.6	59.3	2.24	2.37	1.50	1.43

Table 3.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,  
U. S., 4-week period, March 1955

Type	Percentage of all families buying any type	Quantity purchased			Average price paid per unit
		Average per purchase	Total	Per 1,000 population	
	Percent	Ounces	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Unit Cents
Natural					
American	x	13.3	18,120	113.0	Lb. 63.4
Swiss	x	10.5	3,860	24.1	Lb. 72.1
Cream	x	5.9	3,860	24.1	3 oz. 14.0
Other	x	8.7	3,460	21.6	Lb. 75.4
Processed					
Cheese	x	10.8	10,380	64.7	Lb. 60.9
Cheese foods	x	24.2	6,340	39.6	Lb. 44.1
Cheese spreads	x	14.9	7,800	48.6	Lb. 49.9
	<u>1/ 60.3</u>				
Cottage cheese	--	16.0	43,240	269.6	12 oz. 21.2

1/ Estimated percentage buying each type is supplied in quarterly report.

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.



Table 4.--Natural Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

Year and month	Purchases				Average price paid			
	American	Swiss	Cream	Other	Per pound		Per 3 oz.	
					American	Swiss	Other	Cream
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000				
	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1954-55								
April-----	14,910	3,180	3,390	3,320	63.6	78.0	75.5	14.1
May-----	15,310	2,950	3,460	3,590	63.0	76.8	77.4	14.3
June-----	13,910	3,580	2,880	2,860	62.3	75.4	74.4	14.3
July-----	14,160	3,120	2,500	2,950	63.0	75.0	74.0	14.4
August-----	15,010	2,940	2,310	2,940	62.9	75.1	76.1	14.4
September---	16,140	3,520	2,790	2,950	62.0	74.2	77.2	14.2
October-----	17,280	3,640	3,370	3,520	62.0	72.7	77.4	13.7
November----	16,950	3,100	3,670	3,560	62.8	74.9	74.7	13.5
December----	16,800	3,290	4,090	4,070	63.0	75.1	81.9	13.9
January-----	17,270	3,670	4,210	3,920	63.3	72.0	75.8	13.7
February-----	17,920	3,530	3,950	4,240	62.8	72.5	78.8	14.2
March-----	18,120	3,860	3,860	3,460	63.4	72.1	75.4	14.0

Table 5.--Processed Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

Year and month	Purchases			Average price paid per pound		
	Processed cheese	Cheese foods	Cheese spreads	Processed cheese	Cheese foods	Cheese spreads
	1,000	1,000	1,000			
	pounds	pounds	pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents
1954-55						
April-----	10,740	9,110	5,670	60.9	47.1	57.9
May-----	10,670	9,020	6,290	60.6	45.8	52.0
June-----	10,330	9,420	5,450	61.2	45.8	54.3
July-----	9,900	7,960	5,170	61.5	46.7	53.9
August-----	9,940	7,580	5,710	61.2	46.6	51.9
September---	10,460	8,090	6,000	60.1	45.5	51.9
October-----	10,000	8,160	6,790	61.2	44.8	52.1
November----	9,660	6,360	6,050	61.1	44.5	53.7
December----	9,210	6,210	6,130	62.0	46.1	55.6
January-----	10,020	6,970	7,920	61.4	44.9	51.8
February-----	10,700	7,250	8,350	61.4	44.2	49.8
March-----	10,380	6,340	7,800	60.9	44.1	49.9

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 6.--Cottage Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Year and month	Purchases	Average price paid	
		Per 12 oz. unit for all purchases	Per actual 12 oz. unit purchases
	1,000 pounds	Cents	Cents
1954-55			
April-----	37,370	21.2	22.7
May-----	36,020	21.2	22.5
June-----	35,600	21.0	22.7
July-----	34,300	20.9	22.7
August-----	32,820	21.2	23.0
September---	31,720	21.1	22.8
October-----	32,780	21.3	23.0
November----	32,940	21.4	23.1
December----	30,110	21.2	23.1
January-----	34,990	21.2	23.2
February----	38,200	21.3	23.2
March-----	43,240	21.2	23.0

Table 7.--Nonfat dry milk solids: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Year and month	Quantity purchased			Average price paid	
	Average per purchase	Total	Per 1,000 population	Per pound for all purchases	Per actual 1-pound unit purchases
	Ounces	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents
1954-55					
April-----	21.1	11,080	70.2	38.1	36.7
May-----	21.1	10,880	68.9	37.8	36.1
June-----	22.6	9,560	60.5	37.3	35.4
July-----	23.5	9,560	60.1	36.4	34.8
August-----	22.6	9,410	59.1	35.5	33.7
September---	22.0	9,910	62.3	36.7	34.1
October-----	20.6	10,860	67.7	38.3	35.0
November----	20.3	10,660	66.5	38.5	35.9
December----	19.9	10,110	63.1	39.7	35.6
January-----	18.9	12,360	77.1	40.5	36.1
February----	18.8	13,510	84.2	40.3	35.8
March-----	18.6	13,280	82.8	40.2	35.8

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

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